

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 157

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 1199

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CZ

SUBJECT: DEPUTY FONMIN ON PARTY CONGRESS

1. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER VEJVODA PROVIDED HIS VIEWS
ON XV KSC PARTY CONGRESS TO CHARGE DURING LONG PRIVATE
CONVERSATION AT A DINNER APRIL 22.

2. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, VEJVODA, WHO IS IN CHARGE
OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS, HAS A RATHER WELL
SUBSTANTIATED IDENTIFICATION WITH THE POLICE IN THE
PAST. HE HAS RECENTLY HAD NOTORIETY IN US PRESS BECAUSE
THE DEFECTOR FROLIK, IN HIS CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY, NAMED
VEJVODA AS THE STATION CHIEF WHO MURDERED A CZECH UN MISSION
EMPLOYEE IN THE FIFTIES RATHER THAN LET HER DEFECT; THE GOC
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GAVE US A FORMAL PROTEST ON THIS PRESS PLAY (PRAGUE 473).

THIS WAS CHARGE'S FIRST MEETING WITH VEJVODA SINCE THAT PUBLICITY, AND VEJVODA WAS HIS USUAL CORDIAL AND OUTSPOKEN SELF. HIS VIEWS ON THE CONGRESS MUST BE SEEN IN LIGHT OF FOREGOING, BUT THEY SEEMED REALISTIC ENOUGH, AND THEY ACCORD FAIRLY WELL WITH EMBASSY VIEWS.

3. AFTER SPEAKING OF UNCTAD AND OTHER SUBJECTS, ASKED FOR HIS VIEWS ON KSC CONGRESS, VEJVODA AGREED WITH CHARGE'S ESTIMATION THAT IT HAD BEEN WITHOUT SURPRISES; HE QUOTED THE CURRENT PRAGUE SAYING THAT "THE ONLY SURPRISE HAD BEEN THE LACK OF SURPRISES." VEJVODA THEN SAID BLUNTLY, WITHOUT BEING ASKED, THAT HE THOUGHT HUSAK'S POSITION WAS FIRMER, AND THAT THIS WAS CONFIRMED BY THE CONGRESS. HE SAID A YEAR OR TWO AGO THIS HAD NOT BEEN TRUE, BUT IN THE MEANWHILE THINGS HAD FIRMED UP FOR HUSAK, AND HE SEEMED SOLIDLY ESTABLISHED NOW.

4. VEJVODA WENT ON TO SAY THAT IN THE CHANGES IN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, HE FELT THERE WAS A TREND TOWARDS WHAT WE WESTERNERS WOULD CALL "MODERATES." HE KNEW A NUMBER OF THE NEW MEMBERS PERSONALLY, AND THEY WERE GENERALLY YOUNGER AND MORE "MODERATE" THAN THEIR PREDECESSORS. AGREEING WITH CHARGE'S STATEMENT THAT MFA HAD NOT DONE TOO WELL, VEJVODA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MFA HAD LOST SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE CC, BUT SAID THIS HAD NO INSTITUTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE, BEING RATHER A FUNCTION OF JOBS. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER BERGER, FOR EXAMPLE, HAD BEEN A CANDIDATE CC MEMBER SIMPLY BECAUSE AS AMBASSADOR TO ITALY IT WAS SUPPOSED TO HELP HIM IN HIS DEALINGS WITH PCI TO BE A MEMBER. WHEN CHARGE NOTED PRE-CONGRESS RUMORS THAT FONMIN CHNOUPEK MIGHT BE PROMOTED, VEJVODA SAID CHNOUPEK WOULD HAVE LIKED TO BE ELECTED TO PRESIDUM, OF COURSE; BUT IT WAS NOT TRUE, AS RUMOR HAD HAD IT, THAT HE WANTED TO BECOME A PARTY SECRETARY. IN FACT CHNOUPEK LIKED HIS WORK IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND WISHED TO RETAIN HIS MFA JOB; BUT HE WOULD HAVE LIKED, LIKE GROMYKO IN USSR, TO BE MEMBER OF THE PRESIDUM. CHARGE SAID HE HAD SUPPOSED CHNOUPEK WAS NOT PROMOTED TO PRESIDUM BECAUSE BILAK WAS IN CHARGE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND NAMING CHNOUPEK WOULD HAVE NECESSARILY MEANT TAKING SOMETHING AWAY FROM BILAK. VEJVODA REPLIED EMPHATICALLY THAT THIS HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD, AND NAMING CHNOUPEK WOULD HAVE IMPLIED A DEMOTION FOR BILAK, WHICH WAS NOT POSSIBLE.

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5. CHARGE TRIED OUT HIS VIEW THAT CONGRESS MARKED A TURNING FROM PAST FAVORITISM SHOWN THE SLOVAKS, ESPECIALLY ECONOMICALLY, AND A CERTAIN DEEMPHASIS ON FEDERALISM. VEJVODA SAID THERE WAS SOME TRUTH IN THIS VIEW. HE SAID THERE HAD INDEED BEEN RESENTMENT AGAINST THE SLOVAKS IN SOME AREAS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE SEEMING OVERABUNDANCE OF TELEVISION PROGRAMS IN SLOVAK RATHER THAN CZECH LED TO GRUMBLING AND TO JOKES ABOUT CZECHS TAKING TV SETS BACK

BECAUSE THEY ONLY RECEIVED FOREIGN LANGUAGES. BUT RECENTLY HE
HEARD LESS COMPLAINTS, AND AS FAR AS TELEVISION WENT THOUGHT THE
CZECHS HAD DECIDED THE SLOVAKS TURNED OUT BETTER PROGRAMS.

6. COMMENT. SOME OF THIS WAS A LINE, NO DOUBT, BUT WE WERE
TOLD CHNOUPEK'S GRAND BRIEFING FOR THE MFA ON POST-CONGRESS
FOREIGN POLICY WAS APRIL 23, SO PERHAPS VEJVODA HAD SOMEONE ELSE'S
LINE. THE OLD ADAGE IN EE IS THAT THOSE WITH POLICE CONNECTIONS
SOMETIMES SPEAK THE FRANKEST, SO VEJVODA'S VIEWS, ESPECIALLY
ABOUT HUSAK'S POSITION, MAY BE MORE THAN JUST A LINE.
PERRY

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